



## Montana Invasive Species Act SB 343

SENATE AGRICULTURE

EXHIBIT NO. 4

DATE 2-10-2009

BILL NO. 343

This bill creates framework for any of these State Departments—Fish, Wildlife and Parks; Livestock; or Agriculture—to prevent and manage invasive species, focusing on thwarting the spread of damaging and costly aquatic non-natives.

It authorizes these departments to work individually or cooperatively to 1) identify and prioritize threats, 2) develop invasive species plans, and 3) establish invasive species management areas, if necessary.

- **The bill will prevent and control infestations** through: public education; detection of invasive species at vehicle/boat checkpoints; management, control and restoration of infested areas; authorizing emergency response.
- **This bill is primarily targeted at preventing the spread of zebra mussels and quagga mussels**, non-native aquatic organisms that cause enormous economic damage. These mussels attach to water intake pipes, hydropower facilities, boat hulls and propellers, dock pilings, submerged rocks and even other aquatic animals.
- **These species reproduce rapidly, displacing native species and threatening our lakes.** This invasion would have profound and catastrophic affects on the ecology (plants, fish, wildlife and insects) in Flathead Lake.
- **This bill is cost effective means of keeping our waters and our infrastructure free from invasive species.** The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers estimated the zebra mussel alone generated *an economic loss of \$5 billion* for the nation's industries and communities between 1993-99. The impact to the power industry totaled \$3.1 billion.
- **They're getting too close—we must ACT NOW.** The quagga mussel is firmly established in Nevada's Lake Mead along Highway 93. The zebra mussel is already at the border of eastern Washington.
- **The Governor's budget allocates \$300,000 for the Montana Invasive Species Act.** The bill also authorizes the establishment of an invasive species account, allowing the responsible department to receive money from public and private sources to address invasive species management.

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Thank you  
for your time!  
-Brianna